The dutifull ADVICE *of a loving* SONNE To his Aged *FATHER.*

***

LONDON:
Printed by *R. Raworth*, for *Benjamin Fiſher*; dwelling in Alderſ-gate-ſtreet, at the ſigne of the Talbot. 1636.

THE DVTIFVLL ADVICE OF A LOVING SONNE TO HIS AGED FATHER.

SIR,

I Humbly beſeech you, both in reſpect of the honour of God, your du-

tie to his Church, and the comfort of your owne ſoule, that you ſeriouſly conſider in what tearmes you ſtand; and weigh your ſelfe in a Chriſtian Ballance, taking for your counterpoiſe the Iudgements of God: Take heed in time that the word *Tekell*, written of old againſt *Balthazar*, and interpreted by *Daniel*, bee not verefied in you, whoſe expoſition was,

You

You have beene poyſed in the ſcale, and found too light weight

Remember that you are now in the weining, and the date of your pilgrimage wellnigh expired, and now that it behooveth you to looke towards your Countrey, your forces languiſheth, your ſences impaire, your body droops, and on every ſide the ruinous Cottage of your faint and feeble fleſh threat-

neth the fall. And having ſo many harbingers of death to premoniſh you of your end, how can you but prepare for ſo dreadfull a ſtranger. The young man may dye quickly, but the old cannot live long: the young mans life by caſualty may bee abridged, but the old mans by no Phyſick can bee long adiourned, and therefore if greene yeeres ſhould ſometimes thinke of the

the grave, the thoughts of old age ſhould continually dwell in the ſame.

The perogative of Infancy is innocencie; of Child-hood, reverence; of Man-hood, maturitie and of old age, wiſedome.

And ſeeing then that the chiefeſt properties of wiſedome are to bee mindefull of things paſt, carefull of things preſent, and provident for

things to come : Vſe you now the priviledge of natures talent to the benefit of your owne ſoule, and procure hereafter to bee wiſe in well-doing, and watchfull in the foreſight of future harmes: to ſerve the world, you are now unable, and though you were able, yet you have little cauſe to bee willing, ſeeing that it never gave you but an unhappy welcome, a hurtfull

full entertainement, and now doth abandon you with an unfortunate farewell.

You have long sowed in a field of flint, which could bring you nothing forth, but a crop of cares, and afflictions of spirit, rewarding your labours with remorse, and affording for your gaine, eternall danger.

It is now more than a seasonable time to alter

alter the course of unthriving a husbandry, and to enter into the field of Gods Church, in which, sowing the seed of repentant sorrow, and watering them with the teares of humble contrition, you may hereafter reape a more beneficiall harvest, and gather the fruits of everlasting comfort.

Remember, I pray you, that your spring is spent, your summer over-

over paſt, you are now arrived at the fall of the leafe; yea, and winter colors have long ſince ſtained your hoary-head.

Bee not careleſſe, (ſaith Saint *Auguſtin*) though our loving Lord beare long with offenders; for the longer hee ſtayes, not finding amendment, the ſoarer hee will ſcourge when hee comes to Iudgement: And his patience in ſo long forbearing,

bearing, is onely to lend us reſpite to repent, and not any wiſe to inlarge us leiſure to ſinne.

Hee that is toſſed with variety of ſtorms, and cannot come to his deſired port, maketh not much way, but is much turmoyled; So, hee that hath paſſed many yeeres, and purchaſed little profit, hath had a long being, but a ſhort life; For, life is more to bee mea-

measured by well-doeing, than by number of yeeres: Seeing that moſt men by many dayes, doe procure many deaths, and others in ſhort ſpace attaine to the life of infinite ages; what is the body without the ſoule, but a corrupt carcaſſe? And what is the ſoule without God, but a ſepulchre of ſinne?

If God bee the way, the life, and the, truth, hee that goeth with

without him, ſtrayeth; and hee that liveth without him, dyeth; and he that is not taught by him, erreth.

Well (ſayth Saint *Auguſtine*) God is our true, and cheifeſt life, from whom to revolt, is to fall; to whom to returne, is to riſe, and in whom to ſtay, is to ſtand ſure.

God is hee from whom to depart is to die; to whom to repayre, is to revive; and

in

in whom to dwell, is life for ever: Bee not then of the number of those that begin not to live, till they be readie to dye: and then after a foes desert, come to crave of God a freinds entertainement.

Some there be that thinke to snatch heaven in a moment, which the best can attain unto in the maintenance of many yeers, and when they have glut-

glutted them-selves with worldly delights, would iump from *Dives* Diet, to *Lazarus* Crowne: from the service of Satan, to the solace of a Saint.

But bee yee well assured, that God is not so penurious of freinds, as to hold him selfe and his kingdom scaleable for the refuse and reversions of their lives, who have sacrificed the principall thereof to his enemies, and

and their owne brutish lust: then onely ceasing to offend, when the abilitie of offending is taken from them.

True it is, that a theefe may be saved upon the Crosse, and mercie found at the last gaspe: But well (saith Saint *Augustin*) though it bee possible, yet it is scarce credible, that the death should finde favour, whose whole life deserved death, and that

the repentance ſhould bee excepted, that more for feare of hell, and love of himſelfe, then for the love of God, & loathſomneſſe of ſin crieth for mercy.

Wherefore, good Sir, make no longer delayes; but being ſo neere the breaking up of your mortall houſe, take time before extremitie, to pacifie Gods anger.

Though you ſuffered the bud to bee blaſted,

blasted, though you permitted the fruits to bee perished, and the leaves to dry up, yea, though you let the boughs to wither, and the bodie of your tree to grow to decay; yet (alas) keepe life in the root, for feare left the whole tree become fewell for hell fire; for furely where the tree falleth, there it ſhall lie, whether towards the South, or to the North, to heaven or to

hell; and such sap as it bringeth forth, such fruit shall it ever beare.

Death hath already filed from you the better part of your naturall forces, and left you now to the Lees and remissalls of your wearyish and dying dayes.

The remainder whereof, as it cannot bee long, so doth it warne you speedily to ransome your former

mer losses; for what is age, but the Calends of death; and what importeth your present weakness, but an earnest of your approching dissolution, you are now imbarked in your finall voyage, and not farre from the stint and period of your course.

Be not therefore unprovided of such appurtenances as are behovefull in so perplexed and perilous

a journey; death it self is very fearfull, but much more terible in respect of the judgment it summoneth us unto.

If you were now laid upon your departing bed, burthened with the heavy load of your former trespasses, and gored with the stinge and prick of a festered Conscience; if ye felt the crampe of death wresting your heart-strings, and ready to make

make the ruefull divorce betweene body and ſoule: If you lay panting for breath and ſwimming in a colde and pale ſweat, wearied with ſtrugling againſt your deadly pangs, O what would you give for an houres repentance; at what rate would you value a dayes contrition: Then worlds would bee worth leſſe in reſpect of a little reſpite, a ſhort truce

would ſeeme more precious than the treaſures of an Empire, nothing would bee ſo much eſteemed, as a ſhort trice of time, which now by dayes, and moneths, and yeeres, is moſt laviſhly miſpent.

Oh how deepely would it wound your woefull heart, when looking backe into your former life, you conſidered many hainous, and horrible of-

fences

fences committed, many pious workes, and godly deeds omitted, and neither of both repented, your service to God promiſed, and not performed.

Oh how unconſonably were your caſe, your frinds being fled, your ſenſes affrighted, your thoughts amazed, your memory decayed, and your whole minde agaſt, and no part able to per-

performe what it ſhould; but onely your guiltie Conſcience peſtered with ſinne, that would continually upbraid you with many bitter accuſations.

Oh what would you thinke then, being ſtripped out of this mortall weede, and turned out both of ſervice and houſeroome of this wicked world, you are forced to enter into uncoth

and

and ſtrange pathes, and with unknowne and ugly companie to bee convented before a moſt ſevere Iudge, carrying in your conſcience your inditement, written in a perfect Regiſter of all your miſ-deeds, when you ſhall ſee him prepared to give ſentence upon you; againſt whom you have ſo often tranſgreſſed, and the ſame to bee your Vmpire, whom by ſo many

many offences you have made your ene-
enemies, when not onely the Divell, but even the Angels would pleade againſt you, and your own ſelfe, in deſpight of your ſelfe, bee your owne moſt ſharpe appeacher.

Oh what would you doe in theſe dreadfull exigents, when you ſaw the gaſtly Dragon, and huge gulph of hell, breaking out with moſt

most fearefull flames, when you heard the weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth; the rage of those hellish monsters, the horrour of the place, the terrour of the companie, and the eternitie of all those torments.

Would you then thinke them wise that should delay in so weighty matters and idlely play away the time allotted, to prevent

vent theſe intollerable calamities; would you then count it ſecure to nurſe in your boſomes ſo many Serpents as ſinnes? and to foſter in your ſouls ſo many malicious accuſors, as mortall and horrible offences? Would you not think one life too litle to repent in, for ſo many, and ſo great iniquities, every one whereof were enough to throw you into thoſe un-

unspeakeable and intollerable torments.

And why then (alas) doe you not at the least devote that small remnant, surplussage of these your latter dayes, procuring to make an attonement with God, and to free your Soule and conscience from that corruption, which by your fall hath crept into it.

Those very eyes that behold, and reade

reade this diſcourſe, thoſe very eares that are attentive to heare it, and that very understanding that considereth and conceiveth it, ſhall be cited as certaine witneſſes of theſe rehearſed things. In your owne bodie ſhall you experience, theſe deadly Agonies, and in your ſoule ſhall you feelingly find theſe terrible feares; yea, and your preſent eſtate, is

in

in danger of the deepeſt harms, if you do not the ſoner recover your ſelf into that fold and family of Gods faithfull ſervants.

What have you gotten by being ſo long a cuſtomer to the world, but falſe ware ſutable to the ſhop of ſuch a merchant, whoſe traffique is toyle, whoſe wealth is traſh, and whoſe gaine is miſe-

rie : what intereſt have you reaped, that might equall your detriment in grace and vertue? or what could you finde in the vale of teares, that was anſwerable to the favour of God, with loſſe whereof, you were contented to buy it.

You cannot now bee inveigled with the paſſions of youth, which ma-

king

king a partialitie of things, ſets no diſtance betweene counterfeit and currant, for theſe are now worne out of force, by tract of time are fallen into reproofe by triall of their folly.

Oh let not the crazie cowardneſſe of fleſh and blood daunt the proweſſe of an intelligent perſon, who by his wiſedome cannot

but discerne how much more cause there is, and how much more needfull it is to serve GOD, then this wicked world.

But if it bee the un-grounded presumption of the Mercie of God, and the hope of his assistance at the last plunge (which indeed is the ordinary lure of the devill) to reclaime sinnes from

from the purſuit of Repentance. Alas, that is too palpable a concluſion to miſlead a ſound and ſerviceable man, howſoever it may prevaile with ſicke and ill-affected judgements: who would relyd upon eternall affaires upon the gliding ſlipperineſſe, and running ſtreams of our vncertaine life? who, but one of diſtempred Witts,

would offer fraude to the discipherer of all thoughtes; with whom, dissemble wee may to our cost, but to deceiue him, is vnpossible.

Shall we esteeme it cunning to robbe the time from him, and bestowe it on his enimies, who keepeth tale of the least minutes, and will examine in the end how every mo-

ment

ment hath been imployed.

It is a prepoſterous kinde of pollicie in any wiſe conceit to fight againſt GOD, till our weapons bee blunted, our forces conſumed, our limbes impotent, and our beſt time ſpent; and then when wee fall for faintneſſe, and have fought our ſelves almoſt dead to preſume on his

Mercie.

Oh! no, no, the wounds of his moſt ſacred body ſo often rubbed, and renewed by our ſinnes, and every part and parcel of our bodies ſo divers, and ſundry wayes abuſed, will bee then as ſo many whet-ſtones and incentives to edge and exaſperate his moſt juſt revenge againſt vs.

It is a ſtrange peece

peece of Art, and a verie exorbitant course, when the Shippe is found, the Pylot well, the Marriners strong, the gale favourable, and the Sea calme to lye idlely at the roade, burning so seasonable weather: And when the Ship leaketh, the Pylotte sicke, the Marriners faint, the stormes boysterous, and the Seas a turmoyle of not-

out-ragious ſurges, then to launch forth (hoyſe vp ſayle) and ſet out for a long voyage into a farre Countey.

Yet ſuch is the skill of theſe euening Repenters, who though in the ſoundnes of their health, and perfect vſe of reaſon; they cannot reſolue to cutte the Cables, and weigh the Ancor that withholds them frõ. Gods

Never-

Nevertheles, they feed theſelves with a ſtrong perſwaſion, that when they are aſtonied, their witts diſtracted, the vnderſtanding dusked, and the bodies and ſoules wracked, and tormented with the throbs, and gripes of a morrall ſickneſſe; then forſooth they will begin to thinke of their weightieſt matters, and become ſudden Saints, when they

they are ſcarce able to behave themſelves like reaſonable creatures.

No, no, if neither the Cannon, Civill, nor the common-Law will allow that man (periſhed in jungement) ſhould make any teſtament of his temporal ſubſtance. How can hee that is animated with inward garboyles of an unſetled Conſcience, diſtrai-

diſtrained with the ringing fits of his dying fleſh, maimed in all his ability, and circled in on every ſide with many and ſtrange incumbrances hee thought of due diſcretion to diſpoſe of his chiefeſt Iewell, which is his ſoule, and to diſatch the whole mannage of all eternity, and of the treaſures of heaven in ſo ſhort a ſpurt.

No,

No, no, they that will loyter in ſeede-time, and begin to ſowe when others reape; they that will ryot out their health and beginne to caſt their accounts when they are ſcarce able to ſpeake, they that will ſlumber out the day, and enter their journey when the light doth fail them, let them blame their own folly if they dye in debt, and be eternall

nall beggars, and fall hedlong into the lap of endles perdition.

Let ſuch liſten to St. *Cyprians* leſſon; let, ſaith he, the grievouſneſſe of our ſore bee the meaſure of our ſorrow; let a deep wound have a deepe and diligent cure; *let no mans contrition be leſſe then his crime.*

FINIS.

FINIS.